Challenges of Implementing Effective Responses to Sexual Violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo

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The Issue: Sexual Violence in Conflict

“These are not random acts of violence in the theatre of war, but a deliberate attempt to dehumanize and destroy entire communities.”

- UN Secretary General, October 2007
Where IRC Works
IRC at a glance

- 350-400 survivors per month
- 75-85% report perpetrators are members of armed groups
- One-quarter are under 18
- Periods of relative calm, interrupted by cyclical, brutal violence
IRC’s GBV Program

Seeks to promote the well-being of women and girls and mitigate the immediate and long-term effects of gender-based violence (GBV) against women and girls in North and South Kivu
GBV Program in DRC

- Service Provision to Survivors
- Social Empowerment
- Emergency Response Capabilities
- Advocacy & Coordination

- Over 40,000 survivors assisted
- Sustainable partnership with 7 national NGOs and 40 CBOs
- 600 women in economic empowerment activities
## Going to Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2010</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$500,000 for 1 year</td>
<td>$13.5 million for 3 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>6-7 partners</td>
<td>Over 40 partners</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focus on essential services</td>
<td>Comprehensive programming</td>
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<tr>
<td>2-3 international NGOs doing GBV</td>
<td>Countless NGOs doing GBV</td>
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**CHALLENGE:** How do you scale up effectively?
Challenges: Bridging gap between rhetoric and reality

**Expectations**

- Services provided across Eastern DRC with $15-20 million
- Everyone knows how to address GBV
- Rape is stopped

**Reality**

- Essential services alone require enormous investment
- No common understanding of comprehensive programming
- Prevention is long-term and requires political will

FACT: IRC has one of the largest GBV programs in Congo. GBV programs only comprise 4% of IRC’s overall budget in Congo.
Challenge: Thinking about prevention and response
Recommendations

Develop a common understanding about what a comprehensive GBV program is and what it takes to implement it.

Support more multi-year, robust GBV programs that will respond to the scale of the problem.

Leverage resources going into other sectors by ensuring GBV is integrated.

Invest in partnerships.

Photo: AP / Jerome Delay
Questions